# IRF DA'WAH TRAINING PROGRAMME

## Da'wah To Zoroastrians (Parsis)

## I) INTRODUCTION TO PARSI-ISM / ZOROASTRIANISM

Zoroastrianism is an ancient Aryan religion that originated in Persia more than 2500 years ago. Though it has relatively few adherents, less than one hundred and thirty thousand in the whole world, it is one of the oldest religions. Zoroaster was the founder of Zoroastrianism, also commonly known as Parsi-ism. It is also known as the religion of fire worshippers and Magianism.

Parsi Scriptures consist of 'Dasatir' and Vesta' or 'Zend-Avesta'. Dasatir is further divided into two parts: 'Khurda Dasatir' and 'Kalan Dasatir'.

Avesta is further divided into 'Khurda Avesta' and 'Kalan Avesta' also known as 'Zend' or 'Maha-Zend'.

The religious scriptures of the Parsis are found in two languages: Pahlawi (Pahlawi script resembles the present Persian script) and Zendi. Besides these two scripts, some religious literature is found in cuneiform writing.

Some Parsis consider the 'Zend Avesta' to be more authentic than the Dasatir while the others consider Dasatir to be more authentic.

**Zend Avesta is divided into three parts**:

1) The first part contains Vendid.
2) The second part contains Sirozahs, Yashts and Nyays.
3) The third part contains Gathas, Yasha, Visparad, Afrinagan Gahs and miscellaneous.

**DASATIR**:

Dasatir means a book of ten parts: 'Das' meaning 'ten' and 'tir' meaning 'a part'. Dasatir is also the plural of Dastur, which means law or religious code.

## II) CONCEPT OF GOD IN ZOROASTRIANISM:

God in Zoroastrianism is known as 'Ahura Mazda'. 'Ahura' means 'the Lord' or 'The Master' and 'Mazda' means 'the Wise'; hence 'Ahura Mazda' means 'the Wise Lord' or 'the Wise God'. Ahura Mazda stands for God, in a strictly monotheistic sense.

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Qualities of God according to the Dasatir:

According to the Dasatir, Ahura Mazda has the following qualities:

(i) He is One.
(ii) Nothing resembles Him.
(iii) He is without an origin or end.
(iv) He has no father or mother, wife or son.
(v) He is without a body or form.
(vi) Neither the eye can behold Him, nor the power of thinking can conceive Him.
(vii) He is above all that you can imagine.
(viii) He is nearer to you than your own self.

**Qualities of God according to Avesta**

According to the Avesta, the Gathas and the Yasna give various characteristics to Ahura Mazda such as:

(i) Creator – Yasna 31:7 & 11
Yasna 44:7
Yasna 50:11
Yasna 51:7

(ii) Most Mighty – the Greatest
Yasna 33:11
Yasna 45:6

(iii) Beneficent – 'Hudai'.
Yasna 33:11
Yasna 48:3

(iv) Bountiful – 'Spenta';
Yasna 43:4,5,7,9,11,13,15
Yasna 44:2
Yasna 45:5
Yasna 46:9
Yasna 48:3

Thus, in Zoroastrianism too, we find a concept of an eternal, omnipotent God. Several verses of Yasna praise the Lord as a Bountiful Creator.

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## III) MUHAMMED (PBUH) IN THE PARSI SCRIPTURES

### 1. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in Zend Avesta

It is mentioned in Zend-Avesta-Farvardin Yasht chapter 28 verse 129, Sacred Books of the East, volume 23, Zend Avesta Part II pg. 220:

"Whose name will be the Victorious, 'Soeshyant' and whose name will be 'Astvat-ereta'. He will be Soeshyant (The Beneficent one) because he will benefit the whole bodily world. He will be Astvat-ereta (he who makes the people). Bodily creatures rise up because as a bodily creature and as a living being he will stand against the destruction of the bodily (being) creatures to withstand the drug of the two footed brood, to withstand the evil done by the faithful (idolaters and the like and the errors of the Mazdaynians)".

This Prophecy applies to no other person more perfectly than it does to Muhammad (pbuh):

a) The Prophet was not only victorious at Fatah Makkah but was also merciful when he let go the blood thirsty opponents by saying:

"There shall be no reproof against you this day".

b) 'Soeshyant' means the 'praised one' (refer Heisting's Encyclopedia), which translated in Arabic means Muhammad (pbuh).

c) Astvat-ereta is derived from the root word 'Astu' which in Sanskrit as well as in Zend means 'to praise'. The infinitive 'Sitaudan' in present day Persian means praising. It can also be derived from the Persian root word 'istadan' which would mean 'one who makes a thing rise up'. Therefore Astrat-ereta means the one who praised, which is the exact translation of the Arabic word 'Ahmed' which is another name for Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The Prophecy clearly mentions both the names of the Prophet i.e. Muhammad (pbuh) and Ahmed (pbuh).

d) The Prophecy further says that he will benefit the whole bodily world and the Qur'an testifies this in Surah Al-Ambiya chapter 21 verse 107:

"We sent thee not, but as a mercy for all creatures."
[Al-Qur'an 21:107]

## 2. Sanctity of Prophet's Companions:

In Zend Avesta Zamyad Yasht chapter 16 verse 95, Sacred Books of the East, volume 23 Zend Avesta Part II pg. 308:

"And there shall his friends come forward, the friends of Astrat-ereta, who are friends: well thinking, well-speaking, well-doing, following the good law and whose tongues have never uttered a word of falsehood".

a) Here too Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is mentioned by name as 'Astrat-ereta'.

b) There is also a mention of the Prophet's friends as companions who will be fighting the evil; pious, holy men having good moral values and always speaking the truth. This is a clear reference to the Sahabas.

## 3. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in Dasatir:

It is mentioned in the Dasatir that, "The sum and substance of the prophecy is, that when the Zoroastrian people will forsake their religion and will become dissolute, a man will rise in Arabia. He will be a mercy unto the world. They will become masters of Persia, Madain, Tus, Balkh, the sacred places of the Zoroastrians and the neighboring territories. Their Prophet will be an eloquent man telling miraculous things."

This Prophecy relates to no other person but to Muhammad (pbuh).

## 4) Muhammad (pbuh) will be the Last Prophet:

It is mentioned in Bundahish chapter 30 verses 6 to 27 that Soesyant will be the last Prophet implying that Muhammad (pbuh) will be the last Prophet. The Qur'an testifies this in Surah Ahzab.

"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Messenger of Allah, and the Seal of the Prophets: and Allah has full knowledge of all things."
[Al-Qur'an 33:40]

22/4/2004 PARSES

Dawah to Parsis — Prophet Zoroashtra (oldest) Aryan — non vedic

Book → ① Dastatir — Khoda Dastir
10 + Tir Ten Point
(Law) → Dastur — Salmen Farsi Rosashtra

Q = 22:17 mageans → ② Avista — khoda → cleaniness
Zen Avista — donot allow other place
Q-2-64 sabeans — fire is purest they worship
Symbol of Righteous

Concept of God — AHURA MAZDA
Lord — Wise (Wisdom)
Neat & cleaniness — Can pray any clean fire
936 CE Migrate Merchant
No one, No Father
Not Seen, Not Begoten
Nothing resembles him
Cannot imagine (Pesive)
Mighty, Great
Men & women are equal access fire temple
White colour Garment
Kusti - tie lantine to chord
Standing chant

Peropheacies of Mohd (saw) — Q33:40 → Seal
He shall be victorious — last prophet
sosyant — Praised one Mohd Saw Ahmed
Astivistra — one who praised worth
Racial like Jews
No proporgation
less 130 Thousand Named world 70 Thousand in Mumbai
Come with companion
Zoroashtrans — dissolve their religion — man from Arbia & mercy to people — and all the land will conquer

Striking features — oblige to 5 times Prayer
Same timing
— Creation from nothing (dukan) Q-21.24

Death — Dhamma — flesh — vulture
bone — sun wind.

at Death — word/thought/deed — Good net deed — soul — bridge — Pass — Heaven
— word/thought/deed — Bad — Soul → bridge — collapse — Hell

Fighting Evil & good Spirits — Salvation Criteria for
in this word

Festivals — 6 Gahambles
& Navroz (New day)
Prophet Zoroashtra only one